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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MARK L. PRYOR, a Senator from the State of Arkansas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's prayer will be offered by our guest Chaplain, Rev. J. Wayne Pratt from the Wooddale & Paradise Valley Charge, Scotrun, PA.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray:

God, by whatever name we choose to call You, we thank You for this day and all its welcome opportunities to serve You in the conduct of this great Nation. We thank You for this assembled body of dedicated men and women in their quest for peace, justice, equality, and freedom for all.

You rejoice delightedly in our good intentions and honest deliberations and forgive us freely when we fail to see the common good or lose focus in our labors. We pray that You will continue to guide and direct our work, that it may bring glory to You and perhaps be a model for others to follow.

Send Your gracious blessing upon these Senators and all our leaders at every level. Share with them and with us Your gifts of diligence, integrity, and concern for the welfare of others so that injustice, divisiveness, and thoughtless or selfish acts may be vanquished. Help us to create a sense of peace and harmony that will prevail throughout this Nation and beyond its borders.

In all things, O God, we give You thanks. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MARK L. PRYOR led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, February 28, 2008.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable MARK L. PRYOR, a Senator from the State of Arkansas, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. PRYOR thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of Senator MCCONNELL, there will be a period of morning business for up to 1 hour, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final half.

Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 2634, a bill to require a report setting forth the global strategy of the United States to combat and defeat al-Qaida and its affiliates.

Mr. President, procedurally, we are in a situation where we have asked to be able to legislate on a piece of legislation dealing with the President and those in his Cabinet sending to us reports on what is happening in the global war on terror. What has happened is

what has happened now for more than a year, where the minority is not allowing us to go to that legislation.

We have a situation where we want to move to a piece of legislation. Procedurally, there has been in the Senate for many decades a provision that if we want to move to a piece of legislation and someone objects, the only thing we can do is file cloture on it. We did that. Cloture has been invoked. But now we are leading up to 30 hours. We had 30 hours on the original matter calling for a timeline for changing the course of the war in Iraq, and that was 30 hours we used. Now we are going to do it on this legislation.

It is really too bad we are wasting time rather than getting to the legislation, but that is the way it is. And we, as a very slim majority, have come to accept that.

IRAQ

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it is another day in Iraq and another \$400 million. One only need look at the Washington Post, as I did yesterday, to see what is happening in Iraq. Front page: "Sunni Forces Losing Patience With U.S." And it goes on to say how hundreds and hundreds of these Sunnis, who were helping us, have gone home.

Now, Mr. President, the Sunnis, even before Saddam Hussein, controlled Iraq. They are a minority, but they have controlled Iraq for generations. Now the Shias control Iraq, and the Sunnis, as we all know, are trying to make a comeback. This should cause everyone some concern.

Also, if you look a little bit further in the newspaper, go over to page 12, you will see another story dealing with Iraq. "Iraq Leaders Veto Law on Elections." We have been trying, and in fact it was the purpose of the surge, to bring about some ability in the Iraqis to take over the Government themselves, and they passed 4 pieces of legislation of the 18 that they were supposed to pass. Everyone said at the

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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time they passed they thought basically they were for show. And, obviously, the one calling for elections, which was one of the four, in fact, that has taken place; the Iraqi leaders vetoed the bill on elections. There still could be elections in the fall, but right now they are going to have to do new legislation. So now we are down to 3 out of the 18.

During the month of July, more than one American was being killed per day. We are now at 30 on the 28th day of February. Yesterday, one of my Republican friends, one of the leaders, said the Democrats are in denial. "It's almost as if they are sorry things have gotten better."

Mr. President, all Americans are glad for any American or Iraqi life saved. But unlike the minority, which spent 6 years ignoring the warning signs and following the President's policies in lockstep, Democrats are clear-headed about where this war has been, where it stands today, and what we must do to change course and make our country safer.

Mr. President, last night, I think it was about 7:30 or 8 o'clock, I went back to my office, and there was a man waiting there, one of the Capitol guides. As disabled and wounded Iraqi veterans come through, he brings them by, and if I am in my office, I am always happy to say hello to these wounded veterans. Burt is the tour guide, and my office is just off the Senate floor, so it is fairly easy for them to bring them by.

Last night was a remarkable night. I have met probably 50 of these veterans whom Burt brings around. Last night, a 22-year-old man from Missouri by the name of Matthew McGuire came by. He was there with his girlfriend, his wife to be.

I said: How are you doing?

He said: I'm OK.

He was standing. He was unstable. He had a cane that held him up.

I said: Why don't you sit down, and we will talk a bit.

I said: How long were you in Iraq before you got hurt?

He said: Well, I was there for 6 months.

Five times in that 6-month period, Mr. President, he suffered attacks. Once he was on foot patrol, and he was knocked down by a bomb. One time he was a gunner on a vehicle and was knocked off that. He has all of his limbs. But last month, in January, in one 24-hour period, he had 37 seizures. And I told him about Senator JOHNSON and said: I wish Senator JOHNSON were here.

I talked about Senator JOHNSON being in a coma for the period he was and how much he had improved and that he can now walk on his own and speak 95 percent of how he was able to. I had a picture taken with him; sat and gave them both a hug and kissed her on the cheek. It was really a dramatic night when this young man was telling me that in one 24-hour period he had 37 seizures.

It is one thing to talk about almost 4,000 Americans being killed and 30,000 being wounded, and another when you talk to one of these heroic young men and women. I told him I so appreciated his service to our country and that we are going to do everything we can to make sure the sacrifice he made is not in vain. But these are more than just statistics. These are people. And Matthew McGuire is a person who has been hurt extremely bad. His life will never be the same.

I said: Have you been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder? And he said, yes. But in addition to that, he has brain damage, as indicated by the 37 seizures he had in one 24-hour period. He is only 1 of the 30,000 who have been wounded in a war that is stretching our military to a breaking point.

There is going to be testimony in the Joint Economic Committee today by Nobel Prize winning economist Stiglitz. Mr. Stiglitz has written a book that will come out in about 10 days called "The \$3 Trillion War." This is a Nobel Prize winning economist who has had access to Pentagon records, and he has written how this war has cost and will cost at least \$3 trillion.

General Powell said last year that the Army is about broken, and that is a quote. The day before yesterday, General Casey, Chief of Staff of the Army, confirmed what Powell said a year ago, when Casey said:

The demand for our forces exceeds sustainable supply.

Admiral Fallen and Admiral Mullin agree that concerns about our troop commitment to Iraq may limit our ability to address other global challenges. So we have to take seriously the concerns of General Casey, General Powell, Admiral Fallen, Admiral Mullin, and countless other military leaders and foreign policy experts.

It is time that we understand the sacrifices made by our valiant, heroic military have come at a time when they have done what they needed to do, and we have to get them home. Four hundred million dollars a day. I repeat what I have said a couple times in the last 2 days, Mr. President. The Iraqis believe they have the most significant oil reserves in the world. Everybody recognizes they have the second largest oil reserves in the world. They think they have the largest oil reserves in the world. It is a wealthy nation, and they should take care of their own.

I think what we have talked about is that there should be a force left there of American troops to take care of any counterterrorism activities that need to go forth, and we should have limited training of Iraqis. We have trained almost a half million now, 430,000. And, of course, we have to protect whatever assets we have there. It is a situation that calls for a conclusion.

As I said yesterday, when is enough enough? I think this debate has been good. I think we need to have more in-depth discussions on a Federal program

that is costing us more than \$400 million a day. I think we have spent 2 days on this, and I believe that is not adequate, but we will be back. The President has asked for another, I think, about \$120 billion more to the end of this fiscal year for the war in Iraq, and there will be more discussion at that time. I think we will wait until somewhere late in April to take that up. But the time is coming when we will discuss this in more detail.

I appreciate the good nature of the debate. We just disagree. The Republicans think everything is fine; we don't.

It has been a very positive, in my mind, debate. It has been a civilized debate. I think the American people have been served well by this debate we have had the last couple days.

I would say on the schedule, I am working with the Republican leader to find out when he feels it would be appropriate to have a vote. We are waiting for him. I will visit with him later today.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican whip.

IRAQ AND FISA

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, for the benefit of our colleagues, I will summarize where we are this morning as well. The majority leader and the Senator from Wisconsin offered a resolution, a piece of legislation, and sought to proceed to consider it. Republicans agreed to that. We voted last night to invoke cloture, which means we agreed to proceed to the consideration of that resolution.

It has to do with developing a strategy to deal with al-Qaida. It is, as the majority leader said, a debate worth having. As a result, Republicans were happy to engage in that debate and we will throughout the day.

After the period of morning business, we are back on the resolution. I would urge my Republican colleagues to let us know, let the leadership staff know, when they wish to be here to speak on the matter so the schedules can be coordinated, that everyone can debate the issue as they see fit, and that the minority and majority leader a little later in the day can get together and decide when we might be able to schedule the next vote based upon everyone's desire to speak. So if our colleagues would let us know when they desire to come and make their presentations, that would be very helpful.

I would like to correct one thing the majority leader said, in saying Republicans think everything in Iraq is "just fine." I know he did not mean to suggest Republicans believe the situation in Iraq is "just fine." Because clearly it is not. If it were, we could bring our troops home today.

Unfortunately, it is not "just fine," although it is steadily improving. And when it gets to the point when it is "just fine," we will be able then to bring the remainder of our troops home. The primary difference between